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From: Cathy Noh [cathy.noh@saylorcompany.com]
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Importance: High

Please consider the following press release and statements from the Republic of South Ossetia with regards to the latest round of discussions in Geneva on security in the Caucasus. If you need further information on South Ossetia, please contact me at +1.202.715.1448 or at steven.ellis@saylorcompany.com.

Best regards,

Steve

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PRESS RELEASE

DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH OSSETIA AT THE GENEVA INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS

*On the 13th Round of the Geneva International Discussions on Security and Stability in
Transcaucasia*

On the 14th of October, 2010, the 13th round of International Discussions on Security and Stability in Transcaucasia took place in Geneva. The meeting was attended by delegations from the Republic of South Ossetia, the Republic of Abkhazia, Georgia, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, as well as the representatives of the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), and OSCE. The delegation of the Republic of South Ossetia was headed by the plenipotentiary representative of the President, Boris Chochiev.

In a group dealing with security there was an exchange of views on the current situation on South Ossetia and Abkhazia's borders with Georgia, and a continued discussion on the non-use of force. The delegation of South Ossetia emphasized the urgent need to intensify all parties' efforts on the development of a document that legally secures the non-use of force by Georgia against South Ossetia.

The report by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, on monitoring by independent forensic experts investigating criminal and missing-person cases, received particular attention. With reference to Commissioner Hammarberg's report, the delegation of South Ossetia asked the Discussion Participants to pay particular attention to the conclusions of independent experts about missing citizens of South Ossetia – A. Khachirov, A. Khugaev, S. Pliev, and R. Ikaev, who were captured and held by Georgian law enforcement officials and military groups, and then went missing.

The Delegation of South Ossetia showed video footage to the Discussion Participants of abuse of the above-mentioned citizens by Georgian military and police. Based on Commissioner Hammarberg's report, South Ossetian representatives requested once again that the Georgian side provide comprehensive information about the fate of the missing citizens, and agree to reactivate the mechanisms for preventing and responding to incidents on the border between the Republic of South Ossetia and Georgia.

Representatives of South Ossetia stated that the Government of South Ossetia, within the internationally accepted norms and with the support of UNHCR, was willing to return the

residents of the Leningorsky district who fell victim to the politics and propaganda of the Georgian authorities and left their homes and property in August 2008. This initiative was ignored by the Co-chairs of the Geneva Discussions and the Georgian Delegation left the convention room as a sign of dissent, thereby demonstrating that the Georgian authorities are in fact not interested in the fate of the refugees, but rather in the ability to manipulate the refugee problem to achieve their political goals.

The South Ossetian Delegation informed the Participants in the Discussion that South Ossetia has taken action to designate the state border with Georgia, and suggested that the Georgian side create an appropriate committee, so that mutual work on the border delimitation and demarcation could be started.

The session of the humanitarian issues working group was held without the participation of South Ossetian representatives. A UN General Assembly resolution on the status of refugees and internally displaced persons from Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which was successfully lobbied for by Georgia, turned a refugee problem that was humanitarian in nature into an acute political issue. In a statement made at a session of the security working group, South Ossetian participants stated that the politicization by Georgia of the refugee problem in violation of the earlier agreements renders meaningless the continuation of work on this issue within Working Group II. It is obvious that the main requirement for the voluntary, safe, and decent return of the refugees is the signing of an agreement on non-use of force. The South Ossetian side expressed its readiness to present its position on the refugee issue to the UN General Assembly.

The next Geneva meeting is scheduled for December 16th.

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GENEVA, Oct. 2010 – The following statement was released by the Delegation of the Republic of South Ossetia at the conclusion of the 13th round of the Geneva International Discussions on Security and Stability in Transcaucasia:

As you know, issues related to the dignified and safe return and resettlement of refugees as a humanitarian component of the process of settling the Georgian-Ossetian conflict are the subject of discussion in the second working group of the Geneva international debate. These same issues have been repeatedly addressed by this group and the UN General Assembly, which has passed three resolutions without consulting the primary parties. It should be noted that despite these efforts, there has been no real success in solving the problems of these refugees.

It has been almost twenty years since Georgia expelled more than 100,000 Ossetians, forcing them to leave their homes and property in Georgia and move into the territory of the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia. None of the refugees expelled by the Georgian authorities have been returned to their former places of residence and no one has received compensation for lost housing and property.

The Georgian leadership and the General Assembly are concerned only with the fate of those residents of South Ossetia who are ethnic Georgians and were victims of the Georgian aggression against South Ossetia, which forced them to leave their homes in seven villages near the city of Tskhinvali and move to Georgia during the aggression or after the Georgian army retreated in 12 July-August 2008.

These ethnic Georgians succumbed to the propaganda and threats by the Georgian authorities and included residents of the Leningorsky district of South Ossetia, where fighting in general had not been maintained. Several thousand ethnic Georgians, at the urging of the Georgian authorities, fled their homes and moved into Georgian territory, where they reside in homes hastily built with the money from the U.S. and the EU.

It should be noted that South Ossetia has protected the homes and property of citizens of the South Ossetia-Georgian-Leningorsky district who have moved to Georgian territory. South Ossetia is also providing education in the Georgian language and has invested in the local infrastructure.

South Ossetian authorities have repeatedly, in various meetings and forums, informed the international community about its willingness to consider an arrangement for the safe return from

Georgia of all its displaced citizens, including those residents of the Leningorsky district who did not participate in hostilities against the Republic of South Ossetia and have not committed serious crimes against the South Ossetian government and its citizens.

Despite the reluctance and inability of the Georgian leadership to return more than 100,000 Ossetian refugees to their permanent place of residence in Georgia and compensate them for the cost of lost homes and property, the Delegation of the Republic of South Ossetia at the Geneva international discussions is empowered to declare the following: the Republic of South Ossetia, while respecting the international law governing the issues related to refugees, is ready under the supervision of the UNHCR to help the residents of the Leningorsky district of South Ossetia who were victims of the cynical politics and propaganda of the Georgian authorities and left their homes and property during the period of 12 July-August 2008 to return to their former places of residence, regardless of their ethnicity, and recognizing the jurisdiction of the Constitution and laws of South Ossetia.

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South Ossetia Calls on the International Community Not to Politicize Humanitarian Issues

GENEVA, Oct. 2010 – South Ossetia calls on the international community to reject the politicization of humanitarian issues in the Caucasus and help the victims of the devastation caused by Georgian aggression in August 2008.

Boris Chochiev, Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Republic of South Ossetia (RSO), the head of the South Ossetian delegation at the International Discussions on Security and Stability in Transcaucasia, made this statement by telephone from Geneva.

"In the course of the 13th round of international discussions in Geneva, the delegation from South Ossetia appealed to the international community to follow the example of the Russian Federation, which has led the reconstruction of the facilities destroyed during the Georgian aggression."

The 13th round of Geneva Discussions on Security in Transcaucasia was held on October 14th.

The discussions were attended by the delegations of the Republic of South Ossetia, the Republic of Abkhazia, Georgia, the Russian Federation, the United States, as well as representatives of the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), and OSCE. The next meeting in Geneva is scheduled for December 16th.